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Subject: FW: Democracy Matters E-News
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fyi

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Democracy MATTERS

Change Elections Change America

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DM SUMMIT...SUMMER INTERNSHIPS...CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS... MONEY ON MY MIND...VOTERS FIRST PLEDGE...FACTS YOU CAN USE...CHAPTERS

THE FABULOUS DM SUMMIT

Over 125 DMers, staff, alumni and guests braved the January cold to participate in the three day 2009 DM Summit. Students exchanged ideas, planned for spring actions, and honed their skills in fifteen interactive workshops on the media, coalition building, Congressional fair elections, twitter and tatango, using art for social change, and more.

The keynote address was given by Bob Edgar of Common Cause. Participants also talked with experts from the Brennan Center, Public Campaign, the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, and NY Citizen Action, and heard from young "clean" candidates recently elected in Maine and Connecticut. As one California DMer put it: "This Summit made it clearer than ever that we are part of a huge and growing movement to make democracy real. I'm going back to my campus re-energized and ready to do my part!"

Read more.

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

Democracy Matters has assembled a list of great organizations offering student internships this summer. Many of our national partners including Common Cause and Public Campaign are looking for interns in DC. One opportunity inadvertently omitted is a paid internship for North Carolina students at Democracy North Carolina.

Democracy North Carolina

Fulfilling the Promise of One Person, One Vote

For a copy of the DM summer internship list, email Susan Critton.

Check out this summer internship.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS Democracy Matters campus chapters find creative ways to advocate for reform: testifying at public hearings; writing articles for school papers; organizing marches and rallies; holding their own press conferences, and even sending valentines to elected officials.

Syracuse University
Neysha Alvarez, DM coordinator at Syracuse, testified in support of NY State Clean Elections at a hearing of the NY Senate Committee on Rules and Administrative Reform. Neysha's statement, read to the committee and entered in to the record, stated in part:
"Clean Elections is a practical and proven reform that puts voters in control of elections. Clean Elections would give underrepresented groups the means of having a successful campaign and representing the diversity found in our nation. As an American and a Puerto Rican I would like to see Latinos better represented in our government. Critics have said that youth are tired of this system and do not care anymore. But I am here to prove that we do care! We should push clean elections now in New York to secure publicly funded campaign reform."

Brown University
The Brown Daily Herald reported: *"Snow did not deter members of the Brown chapter of Democracy Matters from trekking to the RI state house Tuesday afternoon [Feb 3rd], posters in hand, for a press conference in support of clean elections in Rhode Island. As students stepped over ice and through piles of snow they called out 'Elections, not Auctions' and 'People in, money out!' On their march they passed out faux $5 bills featuring advertising icon Mr. Clean advocating for campaign finance reform."*

Southern Methodist University
Valentines Day will be the occasion for SMU Democracy Matters students to show their "love" for clean elections by *"creating fancy valentines with a personal message about why we support clean elections. Then we'll send them on to our representatives!"* A great tabling idea. Roses are red, violets are blue...
Read more about Brown University.

OUR TWIN CRISES Jay Mandle's column this month addresses the intersection of the economic meltdown and our environmental crisis, tracing them back to the role of big campaign donations and looking forward to a way out.
Read the full article and explore other issues of MOMM.

CONGRESSIONAL FAIR ELECTIONS: The Voters First Pledge

Every Congressional candidate in 2008 was invited to sign a "Voters First" pledge supporting real change in our "pay-to-play" political system. Over 100 members of the new Congress signed the pledge, committing themselves to making sure that members of congress are accountable to the voters not the funders. The Pledge in part reads:

"If elected, I pledge to make elections fair by supporting a system of public financing for qualified candidates who agree to strict spending limits and take only small donations."
See the complete list (find your own representatives).

FACTS YOU CAN USE The Bailout!

	07-08 Campaign Contributions	Lobbying Expenses	TARP Payment
Bank of America	$5,727,630	$8,790,000	$45,000,000,000
Citigroup	$4,799,678	$7,600,000	$50,000,000,000
JP Morgan	$4,778,638	$53,909,000	$25,000,000,000

The struggling companies whose freewheeling business practices have contributed to our country's economic woes are getting a lucrative return on at least one of their investments. Beneficiaries of the $700 billion bailout package in the finance and automotive industries have spent a total of $114.2 million on lobbying in the past year and contributions toward the 2008 election. These companies' political activities have, in part, yielded them $295.2 billion from the federal government's Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), an extraordinary return of 258,449 percent. The table above presents data on a few of the top TARP Recipients.

See the entire list.

To honor our 2008 DMers we alphabetically list 15 DM chapters in each E-News.

University of Indiana South Bend, University of New Hampshire, University of San Diego, University of Tampa, University of Virginia, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Vassar College, Virginia Tech, Wake Forest University, Washington and Jefferson College, Wesleyan University, Western Washington University, Boston University, California State University Chico...(to be continued)

More Campus Chapters.

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